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IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR THE FIRST REGIONAL COOPERATION FRAMEWORK FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (1997-1999)

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INTRODUCTION

1. The first regional cooperation framework (RCF) for Latin America and the Caribbean (1997-1999) was approved by the Board at its first regular session 1997. It focuses on five priority areas - (a) social development and poverty eradication; (b) governance and the consolidation of democracy; (c) environment and development; (d) science and technology; and (e) trade and integration - with the area of gender as a cross-cutting theme.

2. In response to Executive Board decision 97/9 of 14 March 1997, the present document describes the means by which the objectives stated in the first RCF are expected to be achieved. The implementation strategy for the framework is the result of a broad consultative process carried out throughout the region on each of the priority themes. The present document reflects the consensus that emerged on the main strategic and operational aspects of the regional programme and the progress achieved in each of its components.

I. LESSONS OF PAST COOPERATION

3. The experience gained and lessons learned in the implementation of past UNDP cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean were duly taken into consideration in the formulation of the first RCF. Among the sources considered were: (a) the recommendations of the mid-term review of the fourth regional programme (1992-1996) (DP/1995/47/Add.5); (b) in-house experience and the results of evaluations of UNDP programmes, such as the Office of Strategic Planning and Evaluation's 1996 evaluation, entitled Global, Interregional and Regional Programmes: An Evaluation of Impact; (c) project evaluations carried out in the region; and (d) feedback from UNDP country offices, United Nations agencies and country partners (government leaders and representatives of civil society organizations).

4. The main recommendations included the need to:

(a) Make a greater effort to shape and orient the regional programme to better serve the needs of Governments and societies in the region, thus ensuring participation, sense of ownership and sustainability, requiring the increased involvement of interested actors and closer linkage with UNDP country offices in all phases of the programme cycle;

(b) Narrow the range of priorities and themes to focus the programme on critical and relevant issues, considering the organization's comparative advantages and substantive and operational capabilities, requiring the streamlining of the number of interventions into high-impact undertakings and the centring of the programme in policy dialogue and design;

(c) Stimulate the exchange of knowledge and the dissemination of best practices rather than attempt to provide services to all countries, avoiding support to institutions and making greater use of technical cooperation among developing countries;

(d) Leverage the role of UNDP as a catalyst and facilitator, avoiding isolated operations and strengthen alliances with international partners, particularly those within the United Nations system and the development banks.

II. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND ARRANGEMENTS

5. The lessons learned from past cooperation, the wide-ranging process of consultation carried out throughout the region, and the thrust of the process of change in UNDP provided the basis for the implementation strategy for the first RCF. The strategy adopted reaffirms that the functions of the regional programme are: (a) to provide a long-term regional and subregional vision of development; (b) to address problems that cut across national boundaries; (c) to facilitate exchanges among programme countries; and (d) to act as a hinge between the countries of the region and global issues and commitments. The strategy also builds upon the following UNDP comparative advantages: (a) a comprehensive sustainable human development approach; (b) a neutral position to act as a broker between different parties and countries and an advocate of the values of the United Nations; and (c) a network of country offices with the operational capacity to support regional interventions.

A. Common elements in the design and implementation of the components of the regional programme

6. The guiding principles of the strategy are:

(a) Client-orientation. Regional activities will be anchored from their inception to country institutions and country programmes, as well as by a clear orientation to priority needs, ensuring participation and ownership by Governments and civil society organizations and promoting capacity-building and sustainability. Programmes will be defined through consultations, dialogue and compacts at the national and regional levels, among policy-decision makers, the academic community, civil society organizations and the United Nations system;

(b) Focus. The programme will emphasize activities, particularly in the design of policy alternatives, in the areas of poverty eradication and democratic governance. In addition, the environment, trade, and science and technology will constitute thematic areas, to the extent that UNDP provides value added. Gender comprises a special focus, both in terms of gender-mainstreaming and as an area of concentration. In addition to greater thematic focus, the programme will also target the above-mentioned thematic areas at the subregional levels of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS);

(c) Demonstration and learning approach. The scope of country programmes will be amplified by: providing a regional perspective, intercountry comparisons and standards of excellence in the generation of knowledge and the design of policy alternatives; promoting the region-wide networking of institutions to improve access to knowledge and best practices; and providing opportunities for an exchange of information and experiences;

(d) Alliances and partnerships. Strategic alliances will be strengthened with partners, particularly multilateral organizations (the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the World Bank, the European Union, the Andean Development Corporation (Corporación Andina de Fomento (CAF)) and the Fund for the Plata Watershed) and regional organizations. The regional programme will link with the overall work of UNDP and the United Nations, to benefit from experiences in other parts of the world and to communicate the Latin America and Caribbean experience. Specific activities will establish synergistic relationships with UNDP global and national programmes and with resources earmarked for commitments derived from international and hemispheric conferences. Based on past experience, extrabudgetary resources will be mobilized to maximize impact.

B. Implementation strategy for each thematic area of the regional programme

1. Social development and poverty eradication

7. The objectives of this thematic area are: (a) to gain, through a comparative analysis, greater knowledge about the relationship between macroeconomic policies, poverty and equity; (b) to contribute to the design of macroeconomic policy alternatives, introducing poverty eradication and equity as key parameters; and (c) to promote consensus-building on policy alternatives.

Implementation strategy

Relationship of macroeconomic policies, poverty and equity

8. UNDP, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and IDB are co-financing a comparative analysis in 15 countries through a network of national research teams linked to universities and think-tanks and involving Ministries of Finance as key participants. Special case studies with a gender focus will be undertaken. The World Bank, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) will join the partnership in further comparative analyses of the links between macroeconomic policies and changes in the sectoral structure of production, labour markets and income distribution in 15 to 18 countries. Conclusions and recommendations will be published and distributed both at the regional and national levels. The respective Governments will be supported in using the country analyses to build national consensus on policy.

Basic social services

9. UNDP, the Government of Norway and UNICEF will co-finance a comparative analysis on social public expenditure and macroeconomic policies in 11 countries. The study will assess the domestic public budgets and official development assistance (ODA) resources allocations to basic social services. The relationship between social public expenditure, macroeconomic policies and globalization will be analysed and mechanisms for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of social expenditures will be identified. National teams will comprise members from national research institutions and Ministries of Finance,

Social Affairs, Education and Public Health. Results and recommendations will be presented at the end of 1998, in an international conference organized by the Government of Norway.

Permanent systems of household surveys

10. UNDP will help to expand a current IDB, World Bank and ECLAC regional programme aimed at improving household surveys and the capacity of countries to measure living standards and poverty conditions, a key instrument for the design and monitoring of public policies in the context of sustainable human development. With respect to the Anglophone countries of the Caribbean, and in collaboration with other development partners, the regional programme will seek to strengthen capacities to collect poverty-related data on a systematic basis.

Human development reports

11. The programme, in partnership with the national scientific communities, will assist national programmes in the preparation and publication of national human development reports, through regional workshops and the development of a common methodology. At the regional level, a Commission on Education chaired by a Nobel Laureate is preparing a report, tentatively entitled "A Regional Agenda for the 21st Century - Education in the Perspective of Human Development", for presentation at the April 1998 Summit of the Americas, which is scheduled to be held in Santiago, Chile.

Expected outputs

12. Expected outputs in the thematic area of social development and poverty eradication include: (a) 30 case-studies on the relationships between macroeconomic policies, poverty and equity in 15 to 18 countries; (b) two sets of recommendations at the regional level to incorporate poverty eradication and equity considerations for the design of macroeconomic policy packages; (c) 30 national workshops in 15 to 20 countries to discuss policy alternatives and to promote consensus-building on poverty eradication strategies and equity, with the participation of Governments, relevant United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and selected donors; (d) the collection and dissemination of best practices on partnerships for poverty programmes; (e) improved household surveys and institution-strengthening for poverty measurement and monitoring in 6 to 10 countries; (f) a regional report on education and 10 national human development reports; (g) a network of at least 30 high-level specialists as a UNDP and United Nations system resource base in the areas of macroeconomic policies, poverty eradication and social-economic equity.

Success criteria

13. Success in the thematic area of social development and poverty eradication will be measured by: (a) the relevance of the new knowledge gained and information disseminated for policy decisions; (b) the actual participation of the appropriate decision makers in considering the proposed alternatives; and (c) the extent of involvement of interested parties in consensus-building for policy decisions and of alliances forged.

2. Governance and the consolidation of democracy

14. The strategy in the area of democratic governance follows the guidelines established at the Ibero-American Summit Meeting of Heads of State and Government, held in Santiago, Chile, November 1996, and the Declaration of Viña del Mar. The strategy was endorsed by the Ministers of the Presidency in Santiago, Chile, in May 1997. The objectives of this thematic area are: (a) to contribute to debate and consensus-building, at national and regional levels, on institutional development for governance; (b) to focus on the design of policies for institutional reform and the capacity-building of priority institutions (judiciary, parliaments and political parties) and provide support to processes of decentralization and the strengthening of local organizations; (c) to promote data collection and processing, comparative studies, institutional networking and intercountry exchanges of experiences and dissemination of best practices on key subjects of democratic governance.

Implementation strategy

Institutional development and strengthening of leadership

15. The programme will strengthen national capacities for the analysis, formulation and application of strategies of institutional change and leadership development from a comprehensive view that integrates the political, economic and social dimensions of democracy. The approach emphasizes networking with focal points in several countries of the region and links with specialized academic institutions in developed countries. It includes: (a) building an electronic network on development, institutions and leadership; (b) implementing participatory workshops to foster consensus and to produce reports on key subjects of institutional reform; (c) developing leadership capacity for women and young political leaders; and (d) in the case of the Anglophone Caribbean, through the Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians (ACCP), the programme will support participation, dialogue and action on good governance issues by promoting more intensive involvement of civil society partners, including youths.

Promotion of the rule of law and access to justice

16. The regional programme will emphasize the issue of access to justice by the poor. It will work with judiciary systems, the executive and legislative branches of Governments, as well as with the civil society, including universities and NGOs. The main components of the programme include: (a) the implementation of data surveys and the collection of documentation by subregion to provide relevant information and indicators to judicial authorities; (b) efforts to advance consensus on the definition of regional and national policies and programmes in the areas of youthful offenders, women's and family issues, constitutional processes and penitentiary systems, as well as programmes for normative, institutional and cultural reform; (c) the establishment of a Latin American network of sector authorities, the media and NGOs concerned with judicial reform; and (d) the creation of compacts between UNDP, other United Nations agencies, development banks and bilateral donors on judicial modernization.

Decentralization

17. The programme will provide support to the decentralization processes in the countries of the region through the promotion of debate and the exchange of knowledge and experiences and stimulate coordination for practical action on decentralization (research, development projects and technical assistance) by strengthening the networks of relevant institutions and creating an information and exchange system. The members of the networks will be government agencies, NGOs, academic institutions, private sector and civil society organizations. A regional network and national networks of institutions concerned with decentralization will be created in at least 12 countries; an open information system in the Internet connected to a UNDP global Management Development and Governance Division programme called MAGNET will support the networks and will provide access to a wide range of actors (local governments, NGOs and private sector organizations).

Civic ethics and democratic culture

18. The programme will seek to elevate citizen awareness and disseminate democratic values through communications media and the implementation of cultural activities. The approach goes beyond existing formal institutional frameworks to encompass substantive and informal aspects related to the real structures and ethical and cultural traits that underlie political behaviour. The programme will encompass: (a) country-level events such as concerts, dialogues and videos, with the participation of prestigious intellectuals, leaders and artists; (b) messages disseminated thorough the press and radio; and (c) activities with the participation of grass-roots cultural organizations.

Expected results

19. Expected outputs in the thematic area of governance and consolidation of democracy include: (a) an electronic network on institutional development and leadership, including a centre of documentation, a virtual forum and an electronic bulletin to facilitate knowledge and the dissemination of information; (b) at least two regional workshops and reports per year on key subjects of institutional development; (c) the participation of approximately 300 women and young leaders in a leadership programme; (d) updated, reliable information for decision-making, workshops and programmes designed to address issues of judicial reform; (e) a regional and national network of institutions in at least 12 countries concerned with issues of decentralization; and (f) at least three cultural events per year in various countries and messages on democratic values in the press, including on radio and television.

Success criteria

20. Success in the thematic area of governance and consolidation of democracy will be measured by: (a) the extent to which networking among institutions and individuals is advanced; (b) the degree to which consensus is forged for a common agenda; (c) the level of use of electronic information systems; (d) the formulation of new programmes involving pertinent national institutions in priority areas, particularly in the area of judicial reform; and (e) the extent

of coverage and support for the campaign on cultural values and its self-financing capacity.

3. Environment and development

21. The objectives of this thematic area are: (a) to gain and disseminate knowledge and information about and to develop methods to address key environmental issues; (b) to enhance the environmental dimension in key development policies and sectors; (c) to carry out pilot initiatives to develop alternative technologies and methodologies; and (d) to promote consensus-building on critical environmental issues.

Implementation strategy

Environment and economics

22. A pilot study will be conducted to review environmental legislation in one subregional integration group and to assess the likely impact of the establishment of the Free Trade Area of the Americas on the environment. Comparative studies will also be carried out on: (a) the valuation of environmental goods and services into standardized systems of national accounts; (b) energy efficiency; and (c) regulatory frameworks, with emphasis on the impact of privatization and subsidies on the poor and the environment. A pilot initiative will be conducted to demonstrate the feasibility of decentralized and renewable alternative energy systems. Expected partners include the Global Environment Facility (GEF), ECLAC, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Latin American Energy Organization (Organización Latinoamericana de Energía (OLADE)), the United Nations Statistics Department, the Energy and Atmosphere Programme, and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature.

Financing the environmental agenda

23. The programme will carry out an analysis of the opportunities for joint portfolios with the private sector, an assessment of options for regional financing and investment mechanisms, and an analysis of the trends in aid flows to the environment. Expected partners will include IDB, UNEP and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development.

Promoting the environmental civic ethics

24. The programme will support the conduct of a GEF regional project on environmental citizenship, a case study on biodiversity and gender equity, and a comparative study in selected countries on the capacity of indigenous groups to participate in environmental and social impact assessment. Collaboration with IDB, GEF, UNEP and selected NGOs is expected.

Management of shared natural resources

25. GEF programmes aimed at ensuring improvements in productivity, the quality of production and sustainability in shared water basins and biodiversity

corridors will be promoted. The programme will also support the conduct of a comparative assessment on conflict resolution in shared ecosystems and, jointly with the IDB, a report on coastal and marine resources management.

Expected results

26. Expected results in the thematic area of environment and development include: (a) recommendations for further harmonization of environmental legislation in at least one integration group, a comparative analysis of experiences in introducing environmental factors in national accounts, the use of related methods and a demonstration project in at least two countries, a comparative analysis on energy efficiency, a regional report on energy regulatory frameworks, poverty and environment, and the economic and social sustainability of the pilot initiative in alternative rural energy systems; (b) consensus built among key actors (Governments, civil society, funding institutions) to support and fund regional projects and the attainment of new financing and investment mechanisms for environmental initiatives; (c) a new social compact build around the relationship between the environment, ethics and civic duty ethics and behaviour change related to these issues; and (d) improved productivity and sustainability and enhanced quality of goods and services brought about by shared resources and best practices for conflict resolution in shared ecosystems, and a regional report on the ocean realm from the Latin American and Caribbean Commission on Development and Environment.

Success criteria

27. Success in the thematic area of environment and development will be measured by: (a) the relevance of the new knowledge and methods produced for policy decision; (b) the actual participation of pertinent decision makers in considering the proposed alternatives; and (c) the extent of involvement of interested parties in consensus-building for policy decisions and of partnerships forged, joint initiatives funded and programmes launched relating to the management of common natural resources.

4. Science and technology

28. The objective of this thematic area is to promote access to information on sustainable development through greater utilization of information technologies.

Implementation strategy

Network for sustainable development in the Americas

29. The programme will promote the establishment of a network for sustainable development in the Americas, following the mandate received by UNDP at the Hemispheric Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, in December 1996. Linkages will be established with the Caribbean component of the Small Island Developing States Network. In addition, a pilot, Internet-based electronic network will be established between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of CARICOM member States and their missions abroad, in order to enhance efficiency in the conduct of external relations.

Expected results

30. The expected results in the thematic area of science and technology include: (a) the acquisition of information for decision-making on sustainable development issues; (b) the establishment of databases to assist users in the identification of experts, centres of excellence and best practices; (c) capacity-building of the users to access, create and use sustainable development information; and (d) enhanced communication among development stakeholders.

Success criteria

31. Success in the thematic area of science and technology will be measured by the scope of coverage and enhanced use of the networks in the decision-making process.

5. Trade and integration

32. The objectives in this thematic area include: (a) to assist CARICOM countries in their continuing negotiations in the context of the World Trade Organization (WTO), particularly with regard to services, and in the proposed negotiations on the Free Trade Area of the Americas; and (b) to contribute to the strengthening of existing regional trade and economic integration processes in the Latin America and Caribbean region.

Implementation strategy

CARICOM negotiating capacity

33. In collaboration with United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, relevant issues of the "built-in" WTO agenda and their impact will be assessed and technical meetings and workshops will be convened, with a view to assisting CARICOM countries in preparing their own agendas for trade negotiations. Regional colloquia will be held to sensitize NGOs and the public and private sectors to the new norms governing trade in services and to support effective optimization of recommended policies.

Contribution to the existing regional trade and economic integration process

34. The programme will bring together experts and decision makers and will prepare such technical studies as assessments of the expected costs and potential benefits of selected economic integration groupings and recommendations to inform economic integration efforts in the region. Technical support will be provided for amending the CARICOM legal framework to complete the creation of the single market and economy and to facilitate the adoption of new legislation at the national level. Broad-based consultations and an awareness-building campaign will aim at fostering consensus on the purposes and potential benefits of economic and trade integration.

Expected results

35. Expected results in the thematic area of trade and integration include: (a) three technical studies in the areas of services, guidelines for supporting the CARICOM position in future trade negotiations and capacity-building of Governments for trade negotiations; and (b) studies on the cost and potential benefits of selected economic integration groups.

Success criteria

36. Success in the thematic area of trade and integration will be measured by: (a) the degree to which common regional agendas are furthered in the CARICOM subregion and the incorporation of the new regional legal framework among member States; and (b) the extent to which the cost-benefit studies inform economic integration processes in Latin America and the Caribbean.

6. Gender

37. Based on the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women, the objectives of the thematic area are: (a) developing a common regional agenda on gender and leadership; (b) raising public awareness on the issue of violence against women; and (c) developing tools that will assist mainstreaming of gender-related approaches into development policy.

Implementation strategy

Women and leadership

38. Forums for the identification of needs and common plans of action will be created through the establishment of four regional networks for: (a) persons in decision-making positions; (b) persons in young leadership positions; (c) parliaments and political parties; and (d) civil society organizations. Expected partners include the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), UNICEF and IDB, particularly in follow-up actions.

Violence against women

39. A campaign on violence against women will be launched, building upon synergies inherent in the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights (1998). In support of the campaign, inter-agency activities at the national and regional level will be implemented with the following partners: UNIFEM, UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Department of Public Information, regional and global organizations.

Mainstreaming

40. Through a pilot exercise, efforts will be made to develop gender-mainstreaming tools and strategies in Central America. The exercise will include the selection and development of criteria and the implementation of activities to monitor progress in the area of the advancement of women.

Expected results

41. Expected results in the thematic area of gender include: (a) four regional networks established and a common agenda developed; (b) a programme implemented on violence against women, including the promotion of inter-agency activities, the creation of a directory of organizations and resources available, the production of messages and the promotion of national debates and support to organizations; and (c) tools developed to monitor gender-mainstreaming, directories established best practices documented, and national surveys conducted on issues related to gender themes.

Success criteria

42. Success in the thematic area of gender will be measured by: (a) the extent to which a viable, common regional agenda is established in the area of leadership and women; (b) the extent to which public awareness about violence against women is raised in specific target groups on violence; (c) the extent to which mainstreaming tools are utilized by target groups and disseminated in the region.

III. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

43. Regional organization with the requisite capacities will execute the regional programmes with the support of UNDP country offices. United Nations agencies, particularly the United Nations Office for Project Services, will implement specific project components.

44. The Principal Project Resident Representative (PPRR) and the project coordinator will set a timetable for periodic review of project work plans, which will be results oriented and include benchmarks and performance indicators. An annual review meeting of stakeholders will measure project achievements against benchmarks and success criteria. The PPRR will report to the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (RBLAC) annually on the outcomes of the reviews. An annual report on the performance of the regional programme by thematic area will be submitted by RBLAC to the Programme Management Oversight Committee (PMOC).

45. A headquarters-country Office annual compact will also define the actions needed to buttress regional programmes in the participating countries, as well as those required to enhance the links between regional and country programmes.

46. During 1998, all regional projects will be screened by the methodology developed by RBLAC to assess the potential of projects to have a positive impact on poverty eradication, gender, environment and good governance. A set of 30 variables/indicators has already been tested in more than 800 national projects.

47. The regional cooperation framework will be reviewed in 1999. All regional programmes will be evaluated upon their completion; the issues to be addressed through the evaluations as well as their timing will be determined by PMOC, in consultation with regional bureaux and the Evaluation Office.

IV. EXECUTIVE BOARD ACTION

48. The Executive Board may wish to:

Approve the implementation strategy for the first regional cooperation framework for Latin America and the Caribbean as contained in document DP/1998/10.

Annex

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND ALLOCATION TARGET TABLE
FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (1997-1999)

(In thousands of United States dollars)

Regional cooperation framework programme areas	Resource allocation	
	Core	Non-core
1. Social development and poverty eradication	4 600	5 500 (IDB, WB, bilateral donor)
2. Governance and the consolidation of democracy	5 200	3 500 (CAF, bilateral donor)
3. Environment and development	1 500	49 000 (WB, IDB, GEF, CAP)
4. Science and technology	1 034	1 000 (IDB, GEF)
5. Trade and integration	1 900	-
6. Gender	1 000	-
TOTAL	15 234	59 000

Abbreviations: IDB = Inter-American Development Bank; WB = World Bank; CAF = Andean Development Corporation; GEF = Global Environment Facility; and CAP = Capacity 21.